WE CLAIM:

1.   A computer program product comprising a computer program operable to control a computer to apply a plurality of tests to a target computer file, said computer program comprising:

(i)   a test requestor operable to trigger one or more tests to be applied to said target computer file;

(ii)   test data specifying a plurality of tests that may be applied to said target file, said test data being shared between a plurality of different test requestors;

(iii)   test selecting logic operable to select which tests within said test data to apply to said target file in dependence upon which test requestor triggered said one or more tests to be applied to said target computer file.

2.   A computer program product as claimed in claim 1, wherein said test data specifies a plurality of anti computer virus tests.

3.   A computer program product as claimed in claim 2, wherein said test data is a library of anti computer virus test drivers.

4.   A computer program product as claimed in claim 3, wherein said plurality of different test requestors are a plurality of different anti computer virus programs that share a common library of anti computer virus test drivers.

5.   A computer program product as claimed in claim 4, wherein said test selecting logic selects those anti computer virus test drivers within said library of anti computer virus test drivers that match whichever anti computer virus program triggered testing of said computer file.

6.   A computer program product as claimed in claim 4, wherein said plurality of anti computer virus programs include at least one of:

9

(i)   an e-mail body scanner;

(ii)   an e-mail attachment scanner;

(iii)   an on-access scanning agent;

(iv)   an on-demand scanner;

(v)   a firewall scanner; and

(vi)   a network server scanner.

7.   A computer program product as claimed in claim 1, wherein different tests are applicable to different computer file types, a particular test requestor triggers testing for one or more particular computer file types, and said test selecting logic serves to select those tests applicable to said one or more particular computer file types.

8.   A computer program product as claimed in claim 6, wherein said test requestor is an e-mail body scanner and said test selecting logic selects anti computer virus drivers applicable to scanning for computer viruses embedded with e-mail bodies.

9.   A computer program product as claimed in claim 3, wherein said anti computer virus test drivers within said library have a classification relating to priority of use in testing said target computer file; and said anti computer virus test drivers are applied by said test engine in a priority order dependent upon classification whereby, if testing is terminated before completion, then the highest priority tests will have been applied.

10.   A method of applying a plurality of tests to a target computer file, said method comprising the steps of:

(i)   in response to a test requestor, triggering one or more tests to be applied to said target computer file using test data specifying a plurality of tests that may be applied to said target file, said test data being shared between a plurality of different test requestors; and

10

(ii)   selecting which tests within said test data to apply to said target file in dependence upon which test requestor triggered said one or more tests to be applied to said target computer file.

5   11.   A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein said test data specifies a plurality of anti computer virus tests.

12.   A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said test data is a library of anti computer virus test drivers.

10

13.   A method as claimed in claim 12, wherein said plurality of different test requestors are a plurality of different anti computer virus programs that share a common library of anti computer virus test drivers.

15   14.   A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein said test selecting logic selects those anti computer virus test drivers within said library of anti computer virus test drivers that match whichever anti computer virus program triggered testing of said computer file.

20   15.   A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein said plurality of anti computer virus programs include at least one of:
          (i)   an e-mail body scanner;
          (ii)   an e-mail attachment scanner;
          (iii)   an on-access scanning agent;
25   (iv)   an on-demand scanner;
          (v)   a firewall scanner; and
          (vi)   a network server scanner.

16.   A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein different tests are applicable to
30   different computer file types, a particular test requestor triggers testing for one or more

11

particular computer file types, and said test selecting logic serves to select those tests applicable to said one or more particular computer file types.

17.   A method as claimed in claim 15, wherein said test requestor is an e-mail body scanner and said test selecting logic selects anti computer virus drivers applicable to scanning for computer viruses embedded with e-mail bodies.

18.   A method as claimed in claim 12, wherein said anti computer virus test drivers within said library have a classification relating to priority of use in testing said target computer file; and said anti computer virus test drivers are applied by said test engine in a priority order dependent upon classification whereby, if testing is terminated before completion, then the highest priority tests will have been applied.

19.   Apparatus for applying a plurality of tests to a target computer file, said apparatus comprising:

    (i)   processing circuits operable to serve as a test requestor to trigger one or more tests to be applied to said target computer file;

    (ii)   a memory operable to store test data specifying a plurality of tests that may be applied to said target file, said test data being shared between a plurality of different test requestors;

    (iii)   a test selector operable to select which tests within said test data to apply to said target file in dependence upon which test requestor triggered said one or more tests to be applied to said target computer file.

20.   Apparatus as claimed in claim 19, wherein said test data specifies a plurality of anti computer virus tests.

21.   Apparatus as claimed in claim 20, wherein said test data is a library of anti computer virus test drivers.

12

22.   Apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein said plurality of different test requestors are a plurality of different anti computer virus programs that share a common library of anti computer virus test drivers.

23.   Apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said test selector selects those anti computer virus test drivers within said library of anti computer virus test drivers that match whichever anti computer virus program triggered testing of said computer file.

24.   Apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said plurality of anti computer virus programs include at least one of:

(i)   an e-mail body scanner;

(ii)   an e-mail attachment scanner;

(iii)   an on-access scanning agent;

(iv)   an on-demand scanner;

(v)   a firewall scanner; and

(vi)   a network server scanner.

25.   Apparatus as claimed in claim 19, wherein different tests are applicable to different computer file types, a particular test requestor triggers testing for one or more particular computer file types, and said test selecting logic serves to select those tests applicable to said one or more particular computer file types.

26.   Apparatus as claimed in claim 24, wherein said test requestor is an e-mail body scanner and said test selector selects anti computer virus drivers applicable to scanning for computer viruses embedded with e-mail bodies.

27.   Apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein said anti computer virus test drivers within said library have a classification relating to priority of use in testing said target computer file; and said anti computer virus test drivers are applied by said test

13

engine in a priority order dependent upon classification whereby, if testing is terminated before completion, then the highest priority tests will have been applied.